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Our Reference: 1466

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Ms. Valerie Todd
Project Manager
Canadian Council of Motor Transport
Administrators (CCMTA)
2323 St. Laurent Blvd.
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 4J8

SUBJECT: CCMTA/Police Partnership Award: Sûreté du Québec's proposal for the driving etiquette project

Dear Ms. Todd:

I am writing to recommend the candidacy of Lieutenant Yvan Bilodeau on the driving etiquette project for the CCMTA/Police Partnership Award. We feel that this project meets the award criteria, that is, the forging of special partnerships and a strategy or program aimed at reducing injury and saving lives, as well as raising awareness among the policing committee and general public to help make Canadian roads the safest in the world by 2010.

Lieutenant Yvan Bilodeau's candidacy

Background

First of all, it should be noted that the territorial organization of the Sûreté du Québec (Sûreté) divides Quebec into ten districts, including that of Montréal-Laval-Laurentides-Lanaudière (MLLL). This project had its beginnings in the MLLL district. The purpose of this project is to change road user behaviour to increase the sense of security among road users and, ultimately, have an effect on the Quebec road report.

In 2002, at the request of that district's commander, four directors from the Sûreté's highway police units struck an advisory committee comprising police officers and community representatives. It was agreed at the time that Lieutenant Bilodeau would be in charge of the case. The committee's mandate included developing certain priorities to increase the sense of security among highway users in the Greater Montréal area.

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An opinion poll of 500 people was conducted at the outset, in 2003, to discover user fears in that road network. Survey results showed that road users have fears related to the following violations: tailgating, dangerous passing and speeding. Based on these results, the committee established three priorities, including one to carry out an awareness project to encourage greater courtesy among road users. As chair of the committee, Lieutenant Bilodeau proposed a driving etiquette awareness campaign. The targeted clientele behind this campaign were drivers who deliberately or unintentionally did not respect other road users. Meanwhile, partners joined the committee's ranks: representatives of the Quebec Ministère des Transports (MTQ), Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ), Association des camionneurs artisans inc. (ANCAI), Laurentian Tourism Association, Association de la société d'aménagement de D'Au-tray and two traffic commentators from the 98.5 FM and CKOI/CIME FM radio stations.

The first campaign ran from 1 May to 15 June 2005. The campaign slogan was "Garder vos distances, une question de sécurité et de courtoisie" [Keep your distance: it's a matter of safety and courtesy]. The following awareness-raising activities were carried out: group meetings with students, kiosks in various shopping centres, campaign slogan posters, distribution of 50,000 brochures to all tourist associations of the Greater Montréal area, stickers bearing the slogan on 5,000 ANCAI members' trucks, 60 radio features, nine television appearances, and 18 columns in various local, regional and national newspapers. Prevention activities were also held through police operations to enforce the *Highway Safety Code*, resulting in the issuance of 600 statements of offence.

The campaign was relaunched in 2006. The slogan was changed to "Prudence et courtoisie, partageons la route" [caution and courtesy, share the road]. During this second campaign, which took place around the same time, regional county municipalities (RCMs) in the area joined the campaign as did new partners, including police departments from Montréal, Laval as well as Laurentides and Lanaudière. Each police department was required to identify its local driving etiquette issues and hold road safety activities. This campaign led to activities similar to those carried out for the previous campaign. However, with the addition of new partners, the number of brochures increased (from 50,000 to 80,000) as well as the number of statements of offence (600 to 42,223). By the end of the campaign, all departments were providing Lieutenant Bilodeau with their campaign results; he drew up a final report of activities. For a standard position from all partners, a document was drafted by Mr. Bilodeau and Mr. Pierre Barabé of the SAAQ to explain driving etiquette. Léger Marketing also conducted a survey in which 76% of respondents affirmed that they drive courteously on a regular basis.

In summary, we have noted that, over the years, the project has become increasingly popular and that several partners have joined the campaign.

2007 Campaign

For a third consecutive year, the driving etiquette awareness raising campaign took place from 1 to 30 May 2007. In addition to the 2006 campaign partners, joining the campaign were all radio stations from the CORUS group, i.e. 98.5 FM, CKOI, CIME FM, Q92.5, INFO 690, 940 NEWS and CKAC, reaching some 2,300,000 listeners. A total of 2,100 radio ads on driving etiquette were broadcast for an average of 105 per day. Depending on their local issues, all police departments were required to follow a threefold work outline, one that focused on traffic, socio-communal and public affairs aspects.

This campaign, with the slogan "Caution and Courtesy, Share the Road" gave rise to activities similar to those for previous campaigns and resulted in the following: 1,619 activities were carried out for 6,880 hours; 30,973 statements were issued; 89,039 brochures handed out; and 1,000 posters were hung in various locations such as libraries, city halls and schools. Nearly 300 police stickers bore a bumper sticker as did 5,000 ANCAI members' trucks. Furthermore, a SAAQ-funded Léger Marketing poll collected views from a sampling of more than 1,000 permit holders from the Montréal, Laval, Laurentides and Lanaudière areas. Therefore, 83% of respondents found a lack of driving etiquette to be a serious problem and 32% felt it was a very serious problem. Also, 82% of respondents affirmed they found it easy to allow or yield to another vehicle moving into their lane. This is a 6% increase over the 2006 percentage. Lastly, the various means used to reach clientele bore fruit: 49% of permit holders surveyed indicated they had seen or heard of the awareness-raising campaign. These results illustrate the numerous benefits brought about by the project and encourage efforts to continue with this.

On reading the above, we see that this project's partnerships have strengthened over the years. It began with the Sûreté but soon thereafter, several partners joined in and actively participated in the activities. To this end, numerous approaches were necessary to raise awareness and call on naturally engaged partners to help increase the sense of security among road users and ultimately play a role in a positive road report. Campaign implementation also required approaching the media. Via media partners, a considerable number of people and road users were reached and the project continues to gain ground.

In 2008, the Sûreté's Montérégie area and several municipal police departments will be joining the campaign in order to maximize efforts to fulfill the project's objectives. Actions on the part of the police and the various partners continue to target raising the public's awareness on driving etiquette. Despite all these efforts, drivers alone can improve their efforts and therefore be more courteous. Everyone shares an individual responsibility in this campaign's success.

For further information, we invite you to contact Lieutenant Yvan Bilodeau, Officer in Charge, La Rivière-du-Nord RCM, at 450-436-7725.

Trusting all is to your satisfaction, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Luc Fillion, Chief Inspector
Director, Police Support